



Kindness and Care for Animals®

Where DEI and Animal Welfare Meet

Incorporating DEI mindset and programs into your organization

WWW.MSPCA.ORG

Welcome!

Anastasia Saia

- Community Outreach Manager
- 11 years at MSPCA-Angell
- Lead MSPCA Pride affinity group since 2022

Najah Ali

- Human Resources Manager
- 5 years at MSPCA-Angell
- Lead DEI planning initiative since 2021



How We Got Started

- Vaccine clinics
- Spay Neuter
- AAWA Report: The State of DEI in Animal Welfare (2021)
- DEI committee evolution
- Plan development
- Perspective/priority shift



Education: Steps and Resources



- Build Shared Understanding
 - Research
 - Communicating across differences
 - Implicit bias
 - Microaggressions
- Develop Skills
 - Leadership training
 - Staff training
- Consultants
 - Expert facilitation
 - Organizational assessments
 - Customized training
- Learning Opportunities
 - Conferences
 - Guest speakers
 - Resource library



Dedicating Staff Resources

- Hire staff to support initiatives.
- Tap into existing staff with a passion for moving this work forward.
- Be present in your community.
- Shift DEI from “extra work” to a core organizational function.



Who can do DEI?



Shared Responsibility → Stronger Culture

Senior Leaders	People Leaders
Direction & Accountability <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Vision➤ Resources➤ Inclusive Leadership	Daily Practice of Values <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Hiring & development➤ Team culture➤ Psychological safety
HR & DEI Ambassadors	All Employees
Expertise & Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Policies & frameworks➤ Training➤ Metrics	Shape Everyday Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Inclusive behaviors➤ Advocacy➤ Affinity Groups

What's Important

- Be curious!
 - Open mind
 - Expect to be wrong at times
 - It's about growth over perfection.
- Be Resourceful
 - Impact doesn't require budget.
- Get Support
 - Use experts when needed.

Affinity Groups

- MSPCA Pride
- MSPCA United
- MSPCA Neurodiversity



Linking to Organizational Values



Hiring with a DEI Lens

Staff Diversity

- Expands perspectives and strengthens problem-solving
- Improves cultural responsiveness and service quality
- Builds trust with diverse communities

Common Barriers

- Overemphasis on traditional experience
- Rigid degree requirements that exclude capable candidates

What We Need

- Multilingual talent to meet community needs
- Multiple demographics represented → broader insights, better outcomes
- Salary incentives for language proficiency

Addressing Tokenism

- Do not hire for representation alone
- Hire for skills, lived experience, and contribution
- Build an inclusive environment where staff can thrive

Expanding the Talent Pipeline

- Paid internships and entry level opportunities
- Partnerships with community organizations



Community Medicine



- Outpatient care
- Referrals from private Vets
- Spay/Neuter
- Referrals to other care
- Initial fact finding/advice

Community Outreach

- Food pantries
- Vaccine and SN Clinics
- Transportation
- Presence in the community
- Get everyone involved throughout org
- Law Enforcement perspective shift



Pets For Life



Programs | Tools + Resources | Trainings + Events | Jobs



HumanePro

Laws + Public Policies

Resources by Species

Shelter + Rescue Operations

Community Outreach



Pets for Life (PFL) is driven by social justice and guided by the philosophy that a deep connection with pets transcends socio-economic, racial and geographic boundaries, and no one should be denied the opportunity to experience the benefits, joy and comfort that come from the human-animal bond.

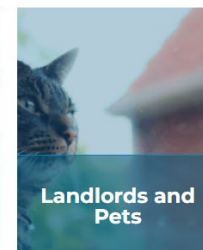
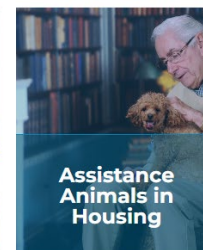
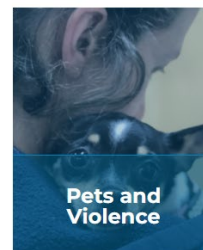
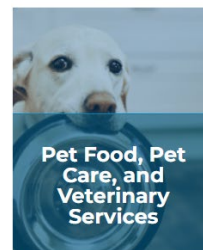
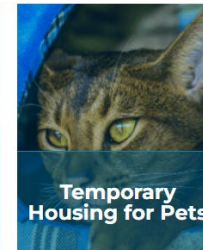
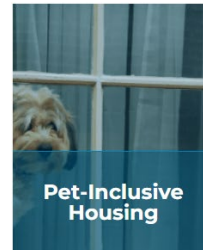
Importance of considering DEI for Shelters

- De-centralize adoption standards
- Better intake info for surrenders
- Surrender prevention – CO driven
- Who makes up your community?
- Diverse staff bring diverse perspectives
- What does your client see when they enter the building?



Access to Pet-Inclusive Housing

- Increase in surrenders
- Restrictions on breed and weight combined with unreasonable fees.
- Less than 10% of available rental units are truly inclusive for dogs of all sizes and types.
- Local housing resources



Know Your Local Human Welfare Organizations

- Food Pantries
- Senior Assistance Programs
- Animal Control
- Housing Authorities



Shifting Programs Based on Need/Current Events

- COVID-19
- SNAP benefits
- ICE activity



Group Breakout

1. Share

- Where have you seen DEI show up in your organization—formally or informally?

2. Ideas

- What is one actionable step you could take to advance DEI in your organization?

THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?

Contact Us At:

Anastasia Saia
asaia@mspca.org

Najah Ali
nali@mspca.org

mspca  ***angell***[®]